

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
AND
PRIVACY ACTS**

**SUBJECT: COMMUNIST INFILTRATION-MOTION
PICTURE INDUSTRY(COMPIC) (EXCERPTS)**

FILE NUMBER: 100-138754

SERIAL: 1122

PART: 14 OF 15



FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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Reporting Office LOS ANGELES	Office of Origin LOS ANGELES	Date 5/20/58	Investigative Period 12/9/57, 1/30, 2/3, 17-19; 3/5, 19, 21, 22; 4/21-24; 5/5, 6/58
TITLE OF CASE COMPIC		Report made by [REDACTED]	Typed By: pk
		CHARACTER OF CASE IS - C	

Synopsis:

Arts and Research Foundation (ARF) claims to be a non-profit organization incorporated in California in January, 1957, "to carry on research in all the arts and natural sciences, including the cinematic arts and cinematography..." This company, located at Los Angeles, has no paid officers but is directed by three trustees. JOSEPH and ANNE STRICK, trustees; ALICE MC GRATH, administrator and public relations representative; HELEN LEVITT, photographer and editor; BEN MADDOW, reported writer for ARF; and CHARLES J. KATZ, attorney, have all be affiliated with the Communist party (CP). On several occasions in 1957 and 1958 ALICE MC GRATH solicited aid from the Los Angeles Police Department for permits to shoot motion pictures at various locations in Los Angeles; and just before Christmas, 1957, MC GRATH sought to photograph traffic check points of the Highway Patrol, which she referred to as "road blocks" and blockades." No film produced by ARF is known to have been completed for exhibition as yet, although the organization is reportedly working on a 16 mm documentary film about Los Angeles to be called "The Savage Eye." Independent Productions Corporation (IPC) and Independent Productions Corporation Distribu-

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Synopsis continued:

tors (IPCD) continue to maintain offices in Hollywood; however, little or no activity has been engaged in for the past year. HERBERT BIBERMAN, who directed IPC's first and only film, "Salt of the Earth," stated in February, 1958, that IPC is inactive and contemplates no further production effort until outcome of its multi-million dollar anti-trust suit against the film industry is decided. BIBERMAN himself has been replaced as President of the IPC by SIMON LAZARUS, Los Angeles businessman and theater operator, who also heads IPC. The House Committee on Un-American Activities (HCUA) does not feel that there is sufficient communist influence and activity in Hollywood film industry to warrant further hearings and none is contemplated at this time. In March, 1958, a multi-million dollar "blacklist" damage suit by 23 film writers and actors against members of HCUA and certain Hollywood producers and distributors was dismissed by the United States Supreme Court.

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DETAILS

AT LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA:

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (CP) IN HOLLYWOOD

None.

COMMUNIST INFILTRATION
OF INTELLECTUAL GROUPS

None.

COMMUNIST INFILTRATION
OF MOTION PICTURES AND PLAYS

ARTS AND RESEARCH FOUNDATION (ARF)

On February 3, 1958, it was learned from T-1 that an organization which called itself Arts and Research Foundation (ARF) in the past several months had been soliciting different city, county and state government agencies for

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aid in making a documentary film about the City of Los Angeles. Informant advised that apparently most of the front or leg work in soliciting this aid was being done by a Mrs. ALICE MC GRATH, an employee of the Foundation; further, that MC GRATH and others connected with ARF had definite communist affiliations, at least in the past.

Although no film production had actually been completed at this time, there was some indication that ARF was more interested in filming those conditions in Los Angeles which would be uncomplimentary.

On March 5, 1958, a record of the Corporation Division, Los Angeles County Clerk, file No. 153917, was examined by SA [REDACTED]. This file reflected that the ARF was incorporated as a non-profit organization under the laws of California on January 25, 1957; that the directors of the organization shall be designated as "trustees," numbering three; namely, JOSEPH STRICK, 3562 Meier Street, Los Angeles; ANNE STRICK, same address; and LUCY OSAJIMA, 3780 Degnan Boulevard, Los Angeles. The articles further provided that the persons who are trustees of the corporation, from time to time, shall be its only members, and upon ceasing to be a trustee, any person would cease to be a member.

According to the articles of incorporation, the aims and purposes of ARF are, among other things, to "carry on research in all the arts and natural sciences, including the cinematic arts and cinematography and to make grants to persons and corporations to further such research work..."

With regard to the individuals who are the "trustees," and other principal figures in the ARF, the following is noted:

ANNE STRICK, Trustee

According to information furnished by T-1 on February 3, 1958, this individual's complete name is ANNE MILICENT LASKIN STRICK. She was born October 2, 1924, at Philadelphia, came to Los Angeles in 1943 and graduated from the University of California at Los Angeles in June, 1944. She married her present husband, JOSEPH STRICK, at San Bernardino, California, September 11, 1945.

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Information from T-2 on February 17, 1945, was to the effect that in about January, 1945, ANNE LASKIN was transferred from the Communist party (CP) at Los Angeles to the CP organization in Washington, D.C.

It was learned from T-3 on November 6, 1946, that ANNE LASKIN was back in Los Angeles and was then a member of the Los Angeles County CP.

On September 21, 1954, ANNE LASKIN STRICK was interviewed at her residence, 3562 Meier Street, Los Angeles, by SA's [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] however, she declined to answer any questions and refused to affirm or deny past or present affiliation with the CP. She did express her opinion that the CP did not advocate the violent overthrow of the Government.

On January 22, 1957, Mrs. STRICK was again contacted by SA's [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] however, although she was courteous, she again declined to comment on her past activities or affiliations.

JOSEPH EZEKIAL STRICK, Trustee

On February 3, 1958, T-1 identified this individual as residing at 3562 Meier Street, Los Angeles. He is a well-to-do Vice President of Fruehauf Trailer Company, Los Angeles. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1923; came to Los Angeles in 1942 where he was a student at the University of California at Los Angeles. He married ANNE LASKIN in 1945. For three years he was in the United States Air Force as an aerial photographer during the past war.

On September 21, 1954, JOSEPH STRICK was interviewed by SA's [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] STRICK said he was reluctant to discuss his past CP activities for the reason that he did not desire to name anyone else. He admitted he had joined the Young Communist League at the University of California at Los Angeles in 1942 and thereafter had become a member of the CP of Los Angeles. He said he had quit the CP completely in 1950 and had not been associated with it since. He commented that while he was in the party, however, he did not believe the CP imposed a threat to the internal security of the United States, and he did not believe the CP intended the violent overthrow of the Government.

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T-4 advised on August 13, 1956, that the CP had been trying to get a donation from JOSEPH STRICK but indications were that they had met with little success.

ALICE MC GRATH
Administrator and
Public Relations
Representative for ARF

Information from T-1 on February 3, 1958, identified MC GRATH as the wife of THOMAS MC GRATH, former film writer. She currently resides at 1521 South Sergeant Place, Los Angeles. She is a Canadian-born, naturalized citizen. Her maiden name was ALICE GREENFIELD. She and her husband were members of the CP as late as 1955 - 1956. In 1954 she was a member of the California Chapter, National Committee of Arts, Sciences and Professions, now commonly referred to as the Hollywood Arts, Sciences and Professions Council.

Information from T-5 on June 15, 1947, was to the effect that ALICE GREENFIELD was then a member of the Los Angeles County Communist Party (LACCP) and had been so affiliated for the past seven years.

On March 21, 1957, T-6 reported that as of November, 1956, ALICE MC GRATH was in a so-called "leave of absence" status with the LACCP.

On January 2, 1957, an attempt to interview ALICE MC GRATH was made by SA's [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] at her then residence, 2740 Marian, Los Angeles; however, she would not permit the interview, stating that she had nothing whatever to say to the FBI.

HELEN S. LEVITT
Photographer and
Film Editor

According to T-1 on February 3, 1958, this individual is believed to be the photographer and editor of a 16 mm documentary film about Los Angeles, tentatively to be called "The Savage Eye," and which is being produced by the ARF. Informant advised although the identification has not been confirmed completely, LEVITT may very well be identical with HELEN SLOAT LEVITT, wife of Hollywood film writer ALFRED

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LEVITT, who in the past has been subpoenaed before the HCUA regarding his past affiliations with the CP. T-1 recalled that in September, 1952, HELEN SLOAT LEVITT was a member of a picketline at the Federal Building in Los Angeles to protest hearings by HCUA.

It is noted that according to the 1952 Annual Report of the House Committee, both HELEN and ALFRED LEVITT, described as a studio reader-writer, had been identified in sworn testimony as CP members. Each appeared under subpoena before the Committee on September 18, 1951, but refused to affirm or deny past or present membership in the CP.

BEN MADDOW, Writer

According to information from T-1 on February 3, 1958, Mrs. ALICE MC GRATH of the ARF had stated some months previously that ARF was trying to get one BEN MADDOW to write a screen play for their picture, "The Savage Eye." Informant does not know whether MADDOW actually accepted the assignment or has written a script for the picture; however, T-1 described BEN MADDOW as a Hollywood film writer in past years, American born and currently residing at 2781 Westshire Drive, Los Angeles.

With regard to MADDOW, it is noted that on August 12, 1952, RICHARD J. COLLINS, Hollywood film writer and one-time member of the CP organization in Hollywood between 1938 and 1948, during an interview with SA [REDACTED] identified BEN MADDOW as a member of the same CP writers branch to which COLLINS was assigned after the war, about 1947 - 1948.

T-7 advised on March 22, 1958, that BEN MADDOW, writer, appeared under subpoena before the HCUA at Los Angeles in March, 1953. At that time, however, MADDOW declined under the First and Fifth Amendments of the Constitution to answer questions as to his past or present membership in the CP. Subsequently, however, MADDOW appeared in an executive session of HCUA on February 14, 1957, and cooperated in answering the Committee's questions regarding his past Communist affiliations.

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On March 5, 1958, BEN MADDOW voluntarily contacted the Los Angeles FBI Office and discussed his past CP affiliations with SA [REDACTED]. MADDOW admitted he had originally joined the CP in New York in 1935. He rejoined the CP organization at Los Angeles in 1946 and at that time was assigned to a writers' group or branch of the CP's organization in the Hollywood film industry. He claimed he had quit the CP for good in 1949 and has not been affiliated with it since.

CHARLES J. KATZ, Attorney

According to the articles of incorporation of ARF, the attorney who drew up the necessary papers was CHARLES J. KATZ. T-1, on February 3, 1958, advised that he did not know whether KATZ was to be the corporation's permanent attorney or not.

According to the 1952 Annual Report of HCUA, CHARLES J. KATZ, Attorney, has been identified in sworn testimony of witnesses before the Committee of having been a member of the lawyers' branch of the CP at Los Angeles about 1946. On October 1, 1952, KATZ himself appeared under subpoena before the Committee, but he refused to affirm or deny past or present CP membership.

LUCY OSAJIMA, Trustee

According to articles of incorporation of ARF, this individual, who resides at 3780 Degnan Boulevard, Los Angeles, was one of the original three directors of ARF and designated as a trustee.

On February 3, 1958, T-1 advised that OSAJIMA is secretary to CHARLES J. KATZ, Attorney, above mentioned, and was possibly a "dummy" incorporator to get the corporation started. She is an American-born citizen of Japanese parentage. Her maiden name is LUCY T. AOKI, and she is married to NATHAN YOSH OSAJIMA, American-born citizen of Japanese parentage, currently working as a draftsman for Erick Murray Associates, 5657 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES OF ARF

On February 3, 1958, T-1 advised that in the past several months ALICE MC GRATH, who calls herself administrator

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for ARF and serves as its public relations representative, had on several occasions solicited aid from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) for permits to shoot motion pictures at different locations in the Los Angeles area. Just prior to Christmas, 1957, MC GRATH contacted a member of the LAPD and asked if he would advise her where the Department was going to establish its traffic "road blocks." She was informed that these were not road blocks and that it was a function of the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and that the CHP established traffic check points.


Soon thereafter Mrs. MC GRATH contacted a member of the CHP with the request that she be permitted to photograph their "blockades." She was informed that the CHP did not establish blockades but rather traffic check points and that it would be beyond the purview of the CHP to grant permission for MC GRATH's organization (ARF) to take pictures of persons other than employees of the CHP; that, however, the CHP would set up a staged check point and interview using CHP personnel to stage a typical check point if MC GRATH so desired. The CHP heard nothing further from MC GRATH regarding their suggestion.

With regard to the exhibition of any film production turned out by ARF, Mrs. MC GRATH has been quoted as stating that ARF's first production effort would be a 16 mm documentary on Los Angeles which would be shown at art theaters and exhibitions.

T-1 advised that up to date there has been no evidence that ARF has completed any film productions. Informant called attention, however, to the fact that in the August, 1957, issue of the publication "Coastlines," page 36, in a column entitled "What's going on Around Los Angeles," the article states, "Also on the line is a new documentary film in the making by Ben Maddow on the life here in old Los Angeles, 'The Savage Eye.'"

INDEPENDENT PRODUCTIONS
CORPORATION (IPC)

Mr. TOM MUCHMORE, co-owner of the Marcel Theater Building, 6021 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, advised SA [REDACTED] January 30, 1958, that IPC and its distributing agents, Independent Productions Corporation Distributors (IPCD), jointly continue to maintain a small office in this building; however, for all practical purposes, the office is closed and seldom during the past year has anyone been seen around the office during normal business hours.



On February 19, 1958, under a suitable pretext, a Special Agent of the FBI learned the following from HERBERT BIBERMAN, 5927 Franklin Avenue, Los Angeles, during a conversation with him. BIBERMAN was the director of IPC's first and only film production to date, "Salt of the Earth."

IPC and IPCD are separate corporations, the former being a film producing company and the latter the distributing agents. Both at the present time have a joint office in the Marcal Theater Building in Hollywood. Mr. SIMON M. LAZARUS is President of both corporations, having replaced HERBERT BIBERMAN as President of IPCD within the past few months. Neither corporation is active at the present time. IPC has produced only one film, "Salt of the Earth," is not in production at the present time and does not contemplate making another picture in the immediate future.

IPCD, the distributing agency, is likewise comparatively inactive because "Salt of the Earth" is not being shown in the United States at all, although it has had some success during exhibitions abroad over the past two or three years. BIBERMAN said he himself is not actively associated with either company at the present time, although he directed "Salt of the Earth;" he continues to have an interest in IPC and IPCD for the reason that if and when IPC and IPCD should win its anti-trust suit presently pending against numerous defendants in the film producing industry,

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he and others who contributed financially to the production of "Salt of the Earth" may recuperate some of their losses.

BIBERMAN said that the basis for the anti-trust suit is that numerous individuals and corporations in the film producing, processing and exhibiting industry conspired to prevent the exhibition of "Salt of the Earth" through normal channels in the United States.

BIBERMAN also said that although "Salt of the Earth" was unsuccessful in the United States, it had done well in some countries abroad; that in 1956 the film had won the grand prize of the Motion Picture Academy of Paris, which, he said, was tantamount to winning the "Oscar" for the best picture of the year by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in the United States. He noted in addition that he himself, as director of "Salt of the Earth," and MICHAEL WILSON, as the writer of the picture, had both won first prizes in these categories at the Motion Picture Academy in Paris.

In regard to HERBERT BIBERMAN, MICHAEL WILSON, PAUL JARRICO and SIMON M. LAZARUS, whose connections with the IPC and/or the IPCD ~~are~~ have been referred to above, the following is noted by way of identification:

BIBERMAN, WILSON and JARRICO, respectively the director, writer and co-producer of the film "Salt of the Earth" for IPC, have been identified in sworn testimony of various witnesses before HCUA as having been members of the CP in Hollywood. According to the 1952 Annual Report of the Committee, all have appeared under subpoena before the HCUA but refuse to affirm or deny past or present membership in the CP.

SIMON M. LAZARUS was subpoenaed before HCUA in March, 1953, and identified himself as a businessman, theater owner and stock holder of the newly-formed IPC. Invoking his rights under the First and Fifth Amendments to the Constitution, however, LAZARUS refused to identify the officers of the IPC and also refused to answer as to whether the company or those behind it had received any financial or other support from the CP to finance the production of "Salt of the Earth." LAZARUS likewise refused to

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state to the Committee whether or not he himself was a member of the CP.

SOVIET ACTIVITY IN HOLLYWOOD

None.

INVESTIGATION OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITY
IN HOLLYWOOD BY THE HCUA

On May 5, 1958, it was ascertained from T-7 that in so far as the HCUA is concerned, the influence and activity of any CP elements in the Hollywood film industry, if any, was too small to warrant further attention in the form of hearings by the Committee at this time. Occasionally the Sub-committee of HCUA arranges to take the statement of some former communist in the film industry who apparently wants to "clear" himself; otherwise, however, the Committee contemplates no future hearings with regard to communist penetration of the Hollywood film industry.

T-7 pointed out that the Committee feels that there are no communist-front groups or activity within the industry at the present time and no real issues about which CP elements can agitate.

ASSOCIATION OF MOTION
PICTURE PRODUCERS, INC.

None.

NEW YORK RAMIFICATIONS OF
COMMUNIST INFILTRATION INTO THE
MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

None.

ANTI-COMMUNIST ACTIVITY

None.

MISCELLANEOUS

According to a dispatch in the "Los Angeles Times," metropolitan newspaper at Los Angeles, under a Washington dateline of March 3, 1958, the United States Supreme Court had, on that date, rejected the \$50,000,000 "blacklist"

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damage suit by 23 Hollywood writers and actors against certain members of the HCUA and numerous motion picture film producers and distributors. The article noted that the complainants, 18 of whom had invoked the Fifth Amendment before the Committee, had charged they were barred from jobs because of the Committee's hearings.

The suit was originally filed in a State Court at Los Angeles which threw out the complaint. This decision was subsequently affirmed by the Second District Court of Appeals in June, 1956, and the 23 plaintiffs showed new contracts or prospective contracts with the defendants and could therefore prove no damage.

The United States Supreme Court order throwing out the suit noted that the case never should have accepted because the lower court's judgment "rests on an adequate state ground."

APPENDIX

"COASTLINES"

"Coastlines", Autumn 1957, issue reflects the publication's address as 2464 North Beachwood Drive, Hollywood, California.

An informant advised on December 2, 1957, that in late 1956 "Coastlines" indicated that it was assuming the unexpired subscriptions of "The California Quarterly" (CQ) which had ceased publication. Many of the contributors to "Coastlines" are former contributors to CQ. "Coastlines", in its articles and editorials, follows a liberal and progressive policy; however, there is no indication at the present time that the Communist Party dominates or controls the publication or lends it financial support.

Informant previously advised on May 14, 1957, that CQ originated as a new "progressive publication" in October, 1951, and ceased publication in January, 1956. During its existence, articles in the publication consistently followed and supported the position of the Communist Party. PHILIP STEVENSON, who was Managing Editor of the publication, has been identified in sworn testimony given before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1952 as having been a Communist Party member for an indefinite period during the 1940's.

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INDEPENDENT PRODUCTIONS CORPORATION

According to the records of the Division of Corporations, Los Angeles County Clerk's Office, the Independent Productions Corporation is a California corporation formed September 18, 1951, for the purpose of producing and distributing motion pictures.

An informant advised on May 9, 1957 that the Independent Productions Corporation's first and only film to date has been the controversial film, "Salt of the Earth" and that the principal figures behind the film were MICHAEL WILSON, HERBERT BIBERMAN and PAUL JARRICO, who were, respectively, the writer, director and co-producer of the film. All three of these individuals have been identified in sworn testimony before the House Committee on Un-American Activities as having been members of the Communist Party in Hollywood. The Independent Productions Corporation has not produced any films since "Salt of the Earth", however, it continues to maintain a distributing office in Hollywood and has brought a multimillion dollar damage suit against major film producers and exhibitors for allegedly preventing exhibition of the film "Salt of the Earth" in the United States.

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER OF THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE ARTS,
SCIENCES AND PROFESSIONS, aka
Hollywood Arts, Sciences and
Professions Council

The "Guide to Subversive Organizations" (revised January 2, 1957) page 132, stated this organization is cited as "one of the major Communist dominated propaganda media on the Pacific Coast" (California Committee on Un-American Activities, Report, 1955, pages 392 and 393).

An informant advised on January 4, 1956, that the Los Angeles Chapter was dissolved on January 3, 1956.

The National Council of Arts, Sciences and Professions has been cited as a "Communist front" by the United States Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities, House Report number 1954, dated April 26, 1950.

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